

The Baptist Record

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Joy comes in the mourning

By Craig Bird

KAMPALA, Uganda (BP) — Joy is coming in the mourning in Uganda. Agricultural production is hampered by too many work days lost attending funerals. Roadside carpentry shops that once displayed cabinets and beds now concentrate on caskets (two basic sizes, adult and infant). A shortage of barkcloth, the traditional burial wrapping, looms. Still, there is ample evidence of quiet, peaceful joy. The Christians of Uganda are trusting in things not seen; their life-after-death hope is a heaven where there will be no weeping and no gnashing of teeth — in other words, no AIDS.

AIDS is the primary producer of pain and sorrow in Uganda, and its death grip on the nation will continue to tighten for at least the next decade, according to even the most optimistic scenarios.

Truck drivers and high government officials, prostitutes and respected housewives, slum dwellers and the rich all are dying from AIDS in increasing numbers. There is no cure for those who contract the disease, no vaccine to form an immunity to it. There is only a string of infections that break down the body.

In the hospital wards, however, Christian AIDS patients astound the other victims by singing hymns of praise to God. Shivering with pain, these believers clutch their Bibles and whisper "hallelujah" when prayers are said over them.



Nalongo was rejected by her community when she became the first born-again believer in that area of Uganda in 1986. When she became ill with AIDS in 1987 she was urged to abandon her newfound faith and seek help with witchdoctors. But she did not waver. By January 1989 her husband, all nine children and approximately 40 friends and neighbors had become Christians and worshiped each Sunday in her home. Above, less than a month before her death last February, she cradles her Bible during a service at her bedside. Too weak to sing, she would tap time on her Bible and whisper "hallelujah" while her children sang hymns of praise. (BP) PHOTO by Joanna Pinneo

And Christians are knocking aside the myths and prejudices which would isolate those with AIDS, denying them human contact.

They stand in stark contrast to non-believers who spend their fortunes on witch doctors only to die anyway, leaving their families destitute; or to others who secretly vow to infect as many others as they can with AIDS before they die; or to those who refuse to let a family member sick with AIDS remain in the house for fear of contamination.

"Soon in Uganda there will be two kinds of people with AIDS," says Linda Rice, a Southern Baptist missionary from Virginia who has worked in Uganda since 1971. "There will be the hopeless and the joyful."

Ugandan Christians share in nu-

merous ways. A group of Baptist students in Kampala has written and produced a play, "The Cross and The Virus," confronting the myths of how AIDS is spread (not by mosquitoes or touching the sweat of someone with AIDS but by sexual contact). The play challenges family and friends to care for victims instead of shunning them. And it presents the need to accept God's offer of salvation. "Today. Don't wait."

The country has been saturated with an eight-page booklet called "Medical Science and God's Word Give ANSWERS To Questions Related To AIDS" that concludes with a section informing AIDS victims how they can attain eternal life.

But perhaps the most powerful means of witness is by dying Chris-

tians in the day-to-day living out of their faith and their hope: — Nalongo, who died recently, was the first person in her village in southern Uganda, 18 miles from the Tanzanian border, to become a born-again believer. She was ostracized from her community but continued to witness until her husband, her seven children and 40 neighbors also became Christians. Two years ago, a year after being saved, she became ill with AIDS.

Too weak to sing, she tapped time on her Bible as her children gathered around her to sing, "praise God because He is very good — his love is everlasting." Her whispered prayer, interrupted by surges of pain, asked God to strengthen her so she wouldn't get discouraged. Her children smiled as they sang.

— Emmanuel, now dead at age 25, was saved two months after becoming ill. He had a vision that death was near and eagerly told his pastor how he wanted his funeral conducted. No one was to cry and only "saved people" were to stand around his casket to testify to his salvation. Approaching his house, the joyous singing of his family could be heard. Only his wife was grief-stricken, her face solemn in contrast to the smiles around her. "She is not yet saved," someone explained quietly.

— Eddie has buried his wife, one of

his three daughters and a brother — all AIDS victims. He became sick in 1988, two years after a dramatic salvation experience when he burned all the idols and witchcraft items in his house. Family and neighbors insist AIDS is his punishment for offending the gods by burning the idols. He cries gently when he talks of how he misses his wife. But he smiles when he tells of his father becoming a Christian or of the response of his Muslim neighbors to twice-a-week Bible studies he hosts. He prays that Ugandan Christians will send missionaries to Zaire and Sudan to tell about Jesus Christ.

The lists go on and on. Christians have not been exempted from the disease which may kill millions of Ugandans in the next few decades. But they obviously have been empowered to rejoice in a God stronger than death.

"Christians don't want to die any more than non-Christians," says Richard Goodgame, missionary doctor from Florida who wrote the Answers brochure. "But they have experienced grace and know there is something beyond this life — something much better."

So, tears of sorrow run down faces in Uganda that smile with hope; gasps of pain come from the same lips that offer praise. There is joy in the mourning.

Craig Bird writes for FMB.



Silvest Senyomo, a 62-year-old farmer and shoemaker, is buried in a Catholic funeral, just a month after his son's death, also from AIDS. Villages in southern Uganda bury so many

AIDS victims that agricultural production suffers from workdays spent at funerals. Senyomo left a widow and three children while his son left five children. (BP) PHOTO by Joanna Pinneo

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

Avoid the tragedy

The tragedy that befell Mississippi because of manipulation of the work of the Southern Baptist Convention committee on nominations must be used to bring correction to that institution so that a similar occurrence will not happen again.

This was not the first year something of this nature has happened in the deliberations of that committee.

First, though it is a committee of unwieldy numbers, there needs to be more than one meeting. When the Mississippians met with the committee in March, that was their only exposure to its work. There was no way that the entire work of the committee could be accomplished in that one meeting, but it was the only input offered the Mississippians.

A subcommittee finished the task. That is a very dangerous concept. What happened this year could happen again. It seems obvious that someone wanted a certain type of person on the board of a given institution, and all that was needed for this to be effected was to tell the committee members from the state that their suggestion would not work for whatever reason. In this case it was because he was a pastor, though a

pastor was finally chosen. Once it was established that the suggestion of the state's delegation was not acceptable, then the subcommittee had free rein. The supplemental suggestion of the state delegation that was made by mail was ignored. And the state delegation had no way of knowing this until it saw a different nominee printed in the first day's bulletin at the convention. At that point the skids are greased. It is almost impossible to make a change.

So there needs to be at least two meetings of the full committee on nominations. What has not been worked out during the first meeting can be taken care of during the second.

In case it is impossible to get it all done even with these conditions and a subcommittee is necessary, that subcommittee absolutely should not act without contacting the state's delegation. If contact cannot be made, the spot should be left vacant. That would prevent such a run around as occurred this year.

But there is another and perhaps even more important aspect that should be changed. The confusion that came about this year was possible because the SBC constitution says that the make up of a board should not

be more than two-thirds either clergy or laity. There is no way to make that sort of mix without at least two meetings, but there needs to be additional work. Either initial preparation should be made to assign a certain number of lay persons and clergy to a state, or each state should come with the proper mix already made.

In the case of Mississippi this year, all of the people already on the Home Mission Board were lay people, so a preacher was in order.

The best practice would be for the chairman to determine who is on the board in question in what mix and assign slots to the state's delegations on the committee in such a way as to come up with the proper mix as-a result.

Whatever the practice, the nominee from a state should never be left to a small subcommittee of the committee on nominations. To do that makes a mockery of having delegations from the states.

That practice should be changed immediately.

And it must be noted that this is a discussion of issues only and in no wise can be taken as a comment concerning the person elected to the Home Mission Board this year from Mississippi.



Protect the flag

The thought of being able to burn the United States flag without facing any consequences is a strange one. Many Americans have grown up with the concept that the flag is not sacred but is the next thing to it. The flag stands as a symbol of our nation, and it would seem to almost akin to treason to burn it.

We've got to have some sort of national pride in order to be able to live with ourselves, and the flag has been somewhat the symbol of that pride. It's difficult to imagine how anyone who has such pride would think of burning the flag. If that sort of pride is not present, perhaps the one without it would give thought to finding some other place to live rather than burning the flag of the land that

he doesn't like.

It is also difficult to determine just what a just penalty should be for burning the flag, but it seems strange that such a burner would go scot free.

Perhaps the court could reconsider its decision on that one. I'm glad that the football hero of my youth, Byron (Whizzer) White, voted with the minority. I am also glad that my U.S. representative, G. V. (Sonny) Montgomery, is one of the signers of a proposed constitutional amendment that would make it a crime to burn the flag.

George M. Cohan put a lot of patriotism in the veins of a lot of us when he sang, "It's a Grand Old Flag."

Let's keep it that way.

Guest opinion . . .

God bless the taxi drivers

By Lynn P. Clayton

God bless the poor taxi drivers! They are the most vulnerable people on earth to someone who has a cause. There they sit, captive audience to the person in the back seat. If the paying passenger has something to say, the driver must listen or risk losing the tip.

And, Southern Baptists were in town primed to witness. The taxi drivers in Las Vegas certainly heard more witnessing than the longest-tenured reprobate in a small town where the Baptist church holds a Lay Evangelism School and two revivals each year.

Well, I'm a Southern Baptist, and I was in town, and I was primed to witness. I would not have a private audience with anyone longer than I would my driver.

I crawled into the front seat of a taxi, keenly ready to try to share my faith. I had prayed for the Holy Spirit's leadership and openness on the part of the driver. Just before stepping into the cab, I reviewed "How to Start a Witness" that I have taught while leading dozens of Lay Evangelism Schools.

F.I.R.M. That acronym has guided me toward a witness many times before and I believed it could do it again. I would try to guide the conversation with the taxi driver in this direction: Family — Interests — Religious background or interest — Message.

As soon as I got into the cab, I knew

things were going to go great. Right on the dash, just above the driver's permit, was a photograph of a 12-year-old boy. He was obviously the driver's son, and his pride and joy.

"That's a good looking boy," I commented, "Is he your son?"

"Yes, sir," the driver responded with obvious pride. "He's my son. I'm a single parent and really enjoy him. He brings me a lot of happiness. Do you have children?"

"Two."

"They can be a challenge, can't they?"

"Tell me about it," I answered honestly. "How is it raising a boy by yourself in Las Vegas?"

"Well, he has never been in a casino. We live out away from the strip and we just never come down here. I try to raise him right in Las Vegas, just like I would anywhere else. You know, the Good Lord is as much help to me here as he would be anywhere else. I just don't see how anyone can make it without the Lord's help, do you?"

I realized the taxi driver was in control of the conversation and was head-

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A missions treat

Mississippi Baptists have a rare treat in store and should be making plans to take advantage of it. Jackson will be location for one of a series of opportunities called MissionsFest.

The date is September 8 and 9.

On that occasion Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, will be here, as will missionaries from all over the world. As pointed out in Alongside, the quarterly publication of the Mississippi Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, "MissionsFest promises us more than a conference. It will be a face-to-face encounter with the world."

Promotional material will be in the mail shortly, but plans to participate

in this MissionsFest should be made now. Much of the activity will be at First Church, Jackson; but a commissioning service will be held at the Jackson city auditorium. The time will also provide the occasion for a meeting of the Foreign Mission Board.

There will be a time for questions and answers, conferences, contact with missionaries, and exhibits prepared by the missionaries.

Opportunities such as this do not come often. Mississippi Baptists should make plans to take advantage of the one being made available to them September 8 and 9.

Guest opinion . . .

Women's Recognition

By Paul Jones

Women's Recognition Sunday, July 16, is the newest emphasis on the Mississippi Baptist Convention calendar. It is an opportunity for the churches of the convention to acknowledge the multi-faceted service, witness, and ministry of Christian women. The unique role of women in home, church, and society provides these bearers of the gospel with often unheralded times of personal witness and ministry.

What would be the home without the godly wife and mother? What would be society without her ministering, witnessing presence? What would be the church without her dedicated teaching, her unfailing witness, her willing service, and her sacrificial giving? For many believers, it was a woman who first taught them the word of God in Sunday School, who led them to first sing "Jesus Loves Me"

in children's choir, who taught them to pray a blessing on their daily food, and who carried them to all the meetings and ministries they participated in as youth.

Sunday, July 16, is an opportunity for the church to recognize the work and witness of women. Women's Recognition Sunday is a time to acknowledge the place of God-called women in the life of home, church, and society. Women's Recognition Sunday is a unique opportunity for the churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention to express their thanks for the ministry, service, and witness of women in home, church, and society.

Paul Jones is executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. Women's Recognition Sunday is an emphasis of the Christian Action Commission.

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Health Fitness Center to open

By Stacey Norris

Giving up the old for the new can be one of the more difficult things we do in life. Mississippi Baptist Medical Center faced such a situation five years ago when a decision had to be made to demolish the old hospital and build a completely new structure on the site. It was not an easy decision. A lot of blood, sweat and tears went into that hospital and families all across the state had memories of it. But time had taken its toll on the unused building and the Board of Trustees decided to build a new establishment, one that could serve the state's healthcare needs just as well as the old hospital once had.

Today, at 1190 North State Street in Jackson, the same location where quality Christian care has been given for years, stands a building where the tradition will continue.

Medical Arts East the newest addition to the MBMC complex offers the utmost convenience to both the patient and physician—exactly what the old hospital did when it opened 77 years ago. An open house and tour is scheduled.

The new facility incorporates outpatient physical therapy, ambulatory surgical suites, outpatient radiology and laboratories, and private doctor's offices. A comprehensive health/fitness center adjoins the rear of the building.

The administration and board of Mississippi Baptist Medical Center invite Mississippi Baptists to tour their new Medical Arts East and Health/Fitness Center at an open house on Sunday, July 23, 1-5 p.m.

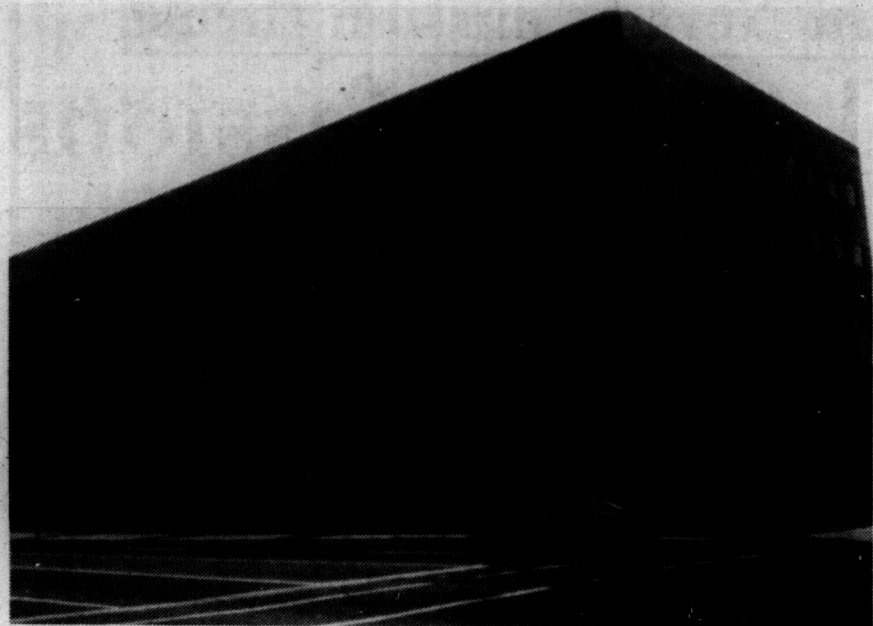
State-of-the-art technology such as CT, dedicated mammography and ultrasound is available in the outpatient radiology center. The ambulatory surgical center has four operating suites and specialized holding and recovery areas. The clinical lab serve the surgical center and private physicians offices located in the building.

The function of the health/fitness center is two-fold. First, it serves, along with the outpatient physical therapy area, as a general physical therapy facility and includes closely monitored exercise programs for stroke and cardiac patients. Second, it offers individually designed fitness programs on a variety of high speed, high intensity exercise equipment. The area includes the state's only Olympic certified indoor track, swim-

ming pool and all-purpose court, as well as expansive exercise rooms, therapeutic pool, and locker rooms.

Other details taken care of with the patient in mind include: a 400 space parking area providing easy building access and security, patient transportation within the building or to the adjoining medical center, a specialized tracking system designed so that admissions will know where the patient is at all times, spacious waiting areas offering a comfortable and attractive environment for families and patients; however, waiting is cut to a minimum with the new, streamlined outpatient system.

Stacey Norris, a student at Mississippi College, served as a public relations intern at MBMC.



The Second Front Page

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MC station wins award for best sports coverage

Mississippi College's commercially owned radio station, WHJT 93.5 FM, has won for the 8th time in nine years the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters Award for the best sports coverage. The announcement was made at the recent MAB annual meeting in Biloxi.

WHJT also won awards for several individual commercials and for commercial campaigns. One of the station's student newscasters, Roger Allen, also won an award in that category.

Russ Robinson, station general manager and play-by-play voice of both the Mississippi College Choctaws and the Clinton High School Arrows, was elected to the MAB's Board of Directors at their recent Gulf Coast meeting.

Flagship station for Mississippi

College Football, the network has increased from a couple of stations carrying three or four games to one that now includes ten stations which blanket the state with every game. It is one of the largest networks in NCAA Division II football.

Among the award winning commercials were "Domino's Late Night Delivery," "Eastover Bank Directions," "Tom Bodett for The Best Western Motel," "Party Line—Fred's Lives," and the longtime favorite "Willie and Frankie" for Daigle, Barham and Holder Insurance. Don Barnes and Todd Garmon, both of Clinton, wrote and produced the commercials.

The campus station serves as a teaching laboratory for students enrolled in the communications program of Mississippi College.

Mississippi will enter partnership with Illinois

By Tim Nicholas

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee authorized the new executive director-treasurer to sign checks and other legal documents, entered into a missions partnership with Illinois Baptists, and voted to change the name of the Church Training Department to conform to the new name of the program at the Sunday School Board.

They also met for three-and-a-half hours in closed door session to hear the report of the Education Commission which studied charges of administrative and fiscal mismanagement at William Carey College. Carey trustees authorized the Commission to apprise the Executive Committee of its findings. Mississippi Baptists await release of the findings pending official response from Carey trustees.

The Executive Committee voted a

resolution expressing confidence that Carey trustees would handle the results of the report properly.

The document-signing authorization takes custodial liabilities from retiring Earl Kelly and places them in the hands of Executive Director-Treasurer-Elect Bill Causey.

The Mississippi-Illinois partnership is not funded, but will depend on volunteers to participate in projects designed to grow churches and help existing ones. The idea for the partnership, according to a letter from Maurice Swinford, executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association, came from Chester Vaughn, program director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Vaughn asked Swinford of the possibility of linking.

Swinford responded favorably and

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Missionary candidates' appointment turned down

By Art Toalston & Eric Miller

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — An Oklahoma husband and wife, both ordained to the ministry, have been turned down for appointment as missionaries by a committee of Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees.

The trustee committee voted 9-4 June 27 not to recommend appointment of Greg and Katrina Pennington of Ardmore, Okla. Board policies stipulate a rejected candidate must wait two years before again seeking appointment.

The Penningtons received publicity after both were ordained by Northwest Baptist Church in Ardmore in November 1986 despite the opposition of Enon Baptist Association.

Harlan Spurgeon, FMB vice president for mission management and personnel, said the committee rejected the Penningtons because of "the way (the couple) dealt with the issue of ordination in the climate of the local association."

The trustee committee's action does not mean ordained women no longer will be appointed as foreign missionaries, said trustee Gary Smith, one of the committee members and pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Enid, Okla.

The same committee has approved two ordained women for appointment as missionaries in the past two years, Smith said. "The committee was pretty unanimous that (women's ordination) is a local-church issue and not a Foreign Mission Board issue."

Committee Chairman Paul Sanders, pastor of Geyer Springs First Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark., voiced concern that Baptists stay centered on sharing the gospel worldwide rather than "focused upon one individual or one couple or one cause. What we're about is much

larger than that."

The Penningtons, who put their house up for sale in May, said they began preparing for foreign mission service 10 years ago at Golden Gate Seminary. Both cried with their parents and friends after hearing the committee had rejected them, Pennington said in an interview June 27.

Two letters opposing the couple's appointment were sent by Enon Baptist Association representatives to administrators at the mission board. The first letter was written in February 1987, the second June 7 of this year.

Pennington has been minister of education at Northwest Baptist since April 1984; Mrs. Pennington became part-time minister of preschool education there two months later. They were not seeking pastoral roles as foreign missionaries, Pennington

would have done youth ministry in Scotland; his wife would have been assigned to church and home ministries there.

Appointment of the Penningtons was recommended to the trustee committee by Foreign Mission Board staff members who work with missionary candidates.

Trustee committee members discussed the couple's situation for more than three hours, Smith said, without being "antagonistic or divisive in any way" with each other.

Smith said committee members weighed their options: if they approved the Penningtons, members of Enon Association "would feel we betrayed them."

If the Penningtons were not approved, some Southern Baptists "would say it was a crusade against women who are ordained."

"I would say most every person changed their vote four or five times during the discussion because of the sensitivity of the issue," Smith said.

He added, "Every person on the committee has been there long enough to know that when we make these decisions, we're dealing with peoples' lives, not political issues. We know that what we did had deep ramifications to the family as well as those within our denomination who feel that women in the ministry are not getting a fair look."

Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks said the trustee committee's vote against the Penningtons was "one of those rather rare instances where the judgment of the committee differed from the recommendation of the staff."

Trustees override a staff recommendation perhaps once or twice a year, Parks said: "The process is ex-

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Greg and Katrina Pennington

In Nevada mission thrust

1,000 professions of faith recorded

By Joe Westbury
ATLANTA (BP) — Nearly 1,000 professions of faith were recorded in Nevada during the evangelism emphasis held in conjunction with the 1989 annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-15, in Las Vegas.

A week of statewide revivals and a one-day visitation of Las Vegas neighborhoods resulted in 978 professions of faith, according to information compiled by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The effort, the largest ever held in conjunction with an annual meeting of the 14.8-million-member denomination, featured saturation visitation, lifestyle witnessing and simultaneous revivals, coordinated by the Home Mission Board, the Nevada Baptist Convention, and the Southern Nevada Baptist Association.

Some 2,025 volunteers knocked on about 120,000 doors in Las Vegas neighborhoods in heat that pushed temperatures near 100 degrees, said Howard Ramsey, director of personal evangelism for the board.

Armed with an eight-point religious

opinion survey, the volunteers from 38 states and the District of Columbia reported 471 professions of faith and 5,000 prospects for church membership in the city's 40 Southern Baptist churches and missions, he added.

Volunteers found about 50 percent of residents home for the Saturday visitation, said Stan Clark, Mission Service Corp volunteer who has coordinated the local planning for the past six months. Clark, from Toledo, Ohio, said Las Vegas Southern Baptists plan to contact the remaining 40,000 homes before the year's end.

Immediately before the convention, 86 of the state's 120 churches and missions participated in "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals, which resulted in 507 professions of faith and 412 other decisions, according to Don Ledbetter, director of evangelism for the Nevada Baptist Convention.

Many of the revivals were led by pastors or laypeople, but 34 full-time vocational evangelists were partially sponsored by the Home Mission Board, said Richard Harris, director of mass evangelism for the Atlanta-based missions agency.

By the time the convention closed, Harris reported, 15 of the 25 churches targeted to begin in the state this year had been started.

In a separate evangelistic encounter not sponsored directly by the denomination, nine professions of faith were recorded during an afternoon of sidewalk evangelism led by several hundred evangelists.

Jay Strack, president of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, said the effort began at the conclusion of the group's annual Wednesday meeting and focused on an afternoon of witnessing along the Strip, an area of Las Vegas known for its elaborate casinos.

About 4,000 gathered for prayer shortly before the march began, but only 450 completed the three-mile walk in temperatures which approached 113 degrees, Strack said.

Strack, a vocational evangelist from Dallas, said more conversions may have been registered but no system was in place to record the decisions. A similar march already is being planned for New Orleans' French

Quarter during the 1990 convention, he said.

In addition to the revivals and neighborhood visitations, Southern Baptists left their mark on the city in a variety of ways:

— More than 90 television spots were purchased, 141 radio spots were aired, and 12 quarter-page ads appeared in local newspapers in Las Vegas and Reno.

— Volunteers distributed most of the 26,000 "Here's Hope" marked New Testaments during their saturation of Las Vegas neighborhoods. A large portion of an additional 25,000 New Testaments previously had been distributed in the simultaneous revivals.

— Four 48-foot "Here's Hope" billboards were placed in strategic locations in Las Vegas.

— Southern Baptists prayed by name for every person in the city's telephone directory.

Louisiana Baptists and the Home Mission Board are planning a similar soul-winning emphasis prior to the 1990 convention.

Joe Westbury writes for the HMB.

Missionary candidates' appointment rejected

(Continued from page 3)

actly the process we've had for many, many years. Any recommendation is subject to whatever scrutiny the board wants to bring to it. The staff recommends; the board makes the determination."

On women's ordination in general, Parks said: "Our policy all along has been that ordination neither qualifies nor disqualifies for missionary appointment. We know Southern Baptists are divided on (women's ordination), and we just feel that the qualifications for missions service should not be influenced by the ordination issue."

The policy, stated in writing by Parks in 1984, noted that eight ordained women were working as foreign missionaries at that time. A few more have been appointed since, mission officials said. A total of 1,911 women currently serve as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries.

The most recent letter from Enon Association opposing the couple's missionary appointment, signed by association Director Don Clark and others, said the Penningtons "were adamant in their pursuit of the ordination." The letter also said several "faithful members" of the church moved their membership from the church after the ordinations.

"It is our conviction that the ordination of Mrs. Pennington violated clear Bible teaching," the association's leaders wrote. They added that the ordination violated another biblical principle, rooted in 1 Cor. 8:13, that Christians should refrain from actions

that might offend fellow Christians. The letter ended with, "We strongly urge that the Penningtons not be considered for mission service."

Mrs. Pennington said in an interview June 28 that the ordination decision involved much study and prayer. "It was something we really didn't seek out, but it was as if the church was calling me out. Ordination was not a real important issue with me, but it was important to our church for identity of me as a minister."

"I think it's a real dangerous thing when other people presume to know the will of God for somebody else," she said, referring to Enon representatives' opposition to her missionary candidacy. "I wouldn't want to put myself in that position, and I'm very sad that they have done that."

"We don't feel resentful. We will get over the hurt and anger." However, with the controversy continuing between conservatives and moderates in the Southern Baptist Convention, she added: "I don't think I would put myself through that (seeking appointment) again. We've gotten so far away from what it means to be a Southern Baptist in our denomination."

It's scary. It breaks my heart. "There's no way I would want to be appointed by another board because I consider myself a denominational loyalist. I consider myself a Southern Baptist."

Phil Christopher, who was pastor at Northwest Baptist Church when the Penningtons were ordained, said, "My heart breaks for us as Southern Baptists, as well as for two people like

Greg and Katrina." Christopher moved from Northwest to the pastorate of Highland Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., in 1987.

When he first met the Penningtons in 1984, Christopher recalled, they stated their long-term goal was foreign missions. "Missions had shaped their lives," he said.

When Northwest Baptist voted on the Penningtons' ordination, after a two-year study of the issue by the church's deacons, nearly 100 members were in favor and about six were opposed, Christopher said. The ordination service was "a high, holy and celebratory moment for all of us. The congregation had been touched by their ministry and we felt we were confirming what God had already done." The congregation lost six to eight families after the vote, Christopher said.

"We realized the possible consequence" of being dropped from associational membership, he acknowledged. In October 1986, Enon Association voted the sanction against any church that ordains a woman. "We really had hoped to avoid that," and Christopher said he met twice with leaders of the association "to try to find some peaceable resolution," but to no avail.

Bill Johnson, current pastor at Northwest Church, said: "The idea that Katrina has been divisive in our association or our church is really a direct reflection on the church. Because it's the church that ordains. It's not a self-ordination. The decision was overwhelmingly carried out by

the church. Johnson is a Mississippian and the son of Billy Johnson, pastor of Dixie Church, Hattiesburg.

"To hear that they were a divisive element, especially Katrina... Well, it's really just a lie, because they are some of the gentlest people that I know. They have deep convictions about what they believe but are not divisive kind of people in any sense. (They are) deeply committed to Christ, called to missions for years, and in every way I think are qualified."

"It's a tough deal, and I'll be honest with you... We didn't really prepare for it... We were preparing for them to be appointed. So we are really saddened by it. It's tough on a lot of people around here."

Current association director Clark said he had no comment on the Pennington case, but went on to say: "There's a lot of hard feelings in the area. It's no secret that the association opposes the ordination of women. It's in the constitution. We're trying to live in an association with a church that we hope one day will turn around."

The Penningtons had planned a celebration party for June 27 whether they were accepted or rejected. At the party, "we all sat around and cried at first, and then it was OK," Mrs. Pennington said.

"God didn't close a door; people did," Pennington said. For now, the Penningtons will stay at Northwest in Ardmore. "God can use us wherever we are."

Toalston and Miller writes for the FMB

Clay Gibson, DOM, dies

Clay Gibson, 62, director of missions for New Choctaw Baptist Association, died.

The funeral service was held July 8 at Mt. Zion Indian Baptist Church, Carthage, with burial at Red Water Cemetery.

Gibson, the first Choctaw to hold the director of missions post for the Indian association, was a native of Leake County. He was a graduate of Clarke College and Mississippi College and earned the master of divinity degree from Southwestern

Seminary.

He was director of missions since 1988, going to that position from the pastorate of Pearl River Church where he served 1984-88. Earlier pastorates included Choctaw Central, Mt. Zion, McAlester Church in Oklahoma, Macedonia, and Old Canaan, Bethany, and Calvary.

He has been a Choctaw tribal council member and chairman.

Gibson is survived by his wife Margie Billy Gibson. They have three grown children.

Six months giving reaches \$9,434,410

Mississippi Baptists gave \$1,573,642 through the Cooperative Program in June, according to an announcement by Earl Kelly, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which channels the funds for the churches.

The total giving for the first six months of 1989 from the nearly 2,000 participating Southern Baptist churches

in Mississippi was \$9,434,410. This amount is \$61,339 more than that given in the same period of 1988.

However, with half of the budget year gone, less than half of the budget has been given. The 1989 Cooperative Program budget is \$20,103,541. That given so far is \$556,022 less than half the total needed.

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Supreme Court:

"Congress may not ban dial-a-porn"

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — Congress may not ban all dial-a-porn, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled.

In an opinion issued June 23, the high court upheld a congressional prohibition against obscene interstate commercial telephone communications but struck down a ban against indecent messages.

The legal dispute arose over a 1988 amendment to the Communications Act of 1988 that imposed an outright ban on all — indecent, as well as obscene — dial-a-porn. Proponents of the amendment claimed it was necessary to guarantee minors would not have access to such sexually explicit messages.

Sable Communications of California, a firm that offers sexually oriented pre-recorded telephone messages to callers in and outside the Los Angeles area, filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, charging the amended statute was unconstitutional and seeking an injunction to keep the Federal Communications Commission and Justice Department from enforcing the law.

The district court upheld the prohibition of obscene telephone messages as constitutional but found the prohibition of indecent messages to be unconstitutional.

In writing for the high court, Justice Byron R. White said the constitution has no prohibition against Congress' banning the interstate transmission of obscene commercial telephone recordings.

Also, such a ban "no more establishes a 'national standard' of obscenity than do federal statutes prohibiting the mailing of obscene materials or the broadcasting of obscene messages," White wrote.

But the court rejected the government's argument that nothing short of a total ban on dial-a-porn could prevent children from gaining access to such messages.

Although the government has a

compelling interest in protecting children from exposure to indecent dial-a-porn messages, White said, the Communications Act amendment was not drawn narrowly enough to avoid violating the First Amendment.

"It is not enough to show that the government's ends are compelling; the means must be carefully tailored to achieve those ends," he wrote.

The court drew a distinction between the case in question and a 1978 dispute — FCC v. Pacifica Foundation — in which the court considered whether the FCC has the power to regulate a radio broadcast that is indecent but not obscene.

God bless the taxi drivers

(Continued from page 2)

ed right toward a personal witness of faith in Christ and how I could know Christ as my Saviour.

"No, I really don't," I answered honestly. "How does God help you?"

He told me, from the bottom of his heart. Not with professional clarity or polished words, but with sincerity that was overwhelming.

Before he could ask me if I had that kind of relationship with Christ, the ride suddenly was over. We were at the door of the hotel. There were taxis behind, anxious to unload their cargo and pick up some more. I was late for a meeting. My driver had other people waiting. The doorman had popped open my door.

"I know him as my Saviour," I said quickly as I stepped out the door. "He helps me, too. Keep telling your story."

Realizing how much I needed to hear that testimony, I exhorted him, "Keep giving that testimony. There are a lot of Southern Baptists in town who need to hear it."

Lynn Clayton is editor of the Baptist Message in Louisiana.

World Ministries organizes in Vegas

By Art Toalston

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (BP) — The Fellowship of Baptist World Ministries was organized in Las Vegas, Nev., June 15, with its leaders pledging close cooperation with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and overseas Baptist bodies.

The aim of the fellowship is greater unity in Southern Baptist world evangelization efforts, organizers said.

The fellowship would encompass as many as 70 organizations founded by and involving Southern Baptist ministers and laypeople in a range of overseas efforts, said the fellowship's first president, W.H. (Dub) Jackson. Jackson is president of World Evangelism Foundation of Dallas.

Leaders of the 15 charter member organizations in the new fellowship have "a desire to cooperate with the total program of Southern Baptists all over the world," Jackson said.

The organizational meeting followed two other gatherings of represen-

tatives of the Southern Baptist-related ministries. The first, Feb. 7 of this year, was initiated by the president of the Foreign Mission Board, R. Keith Parks, who voiced a concern for greater understanding and cooperation between the denomination's missions agency and the various independent groups.

Bill O'Brien, the Foreign Mission Board's executive vice president, said, "This (new fellowship) represents a further step in the dialogue and mutual understanding of the roles and ministries of each entity — and how all these resources can be brought to bear in a more effective way on world evangelization."

The organization's mailing address will be 1204 South Third, Suite A, Louisville, Ky., 40203.

O'Brien will be the Foreign Mission Board's liaison to the new fellowship, and James T. Draper Jr. will be its pastor adviser.

WMU leadership training set for August at Camp Garaywa

To provide leadership training opportunities for every person who will assume WMU responsibilities for 1989-90, the State WMU Department will offer several sessions from which to choose. Day, evening, and an overnight are the three options. "Leaders are urged to choose the most convenient session and come to Camp Garaywa in August. Each session follows the same format," states Ashley McCaleb, consultant, WMU.

Choices include a day session, August 7, 8, 9, 10, or 12 from 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; an evening session, August 7 or 8, from 6:30-9 p.m. (Supper at 5:30 is available in reservation. Contact the WMU office at 968-3800 or P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. Deadline is August 3.); a WMU Overnight, August 11-12. Registration 4 p.m., supper at 6 on Friday. The Saturday session concludes at 2:30. Cost is \$20 per person. Make reservations through the WMU office. Those who cannot attend any of the weekday or evening sessions or the entire Overnight may choose Saturday only.

Highlights of each day session, 9-9:30 a.m., will be an informal time for chatting with missionaries Charles and Indy Whitten, retired from Equatorial Guinea and Spain, and Ralph and Gena Calcote, retired from Japan.

The Calcotes will also share background and curios on Japan, the 1989 Foreign Mission study focus, during each session. Bring a camera.

The Baptist Book Store will be open at some time during each session. Conferees will need a manual and a new WMU Year Book.

The following conferences, led by experienced leaders, will be a major part of each session, along with ex-

change of experiences and ideas among conferees.

Age-Level Conferences:

WMU: WMU Directors, Roberta Johnston, Brookhaven; WMU Secretaries, Marjean Patterson, WMU staff, Jackson (offered separately for the first time); Enlistment/Enlargement Directors, Joan Tyler, Collins (first time separately); Mission Study Directors, Faye Sanders, Holly Springs; Mission Support Directors, Peggy Huey, Hattiesburg; Mission Action Directors, Marty Perkins, Moss Point.

Baptist Women: Presidents, Bobbie Travis, Hattiesburg; Inexperienced Presidents (Tuesday day session), Janet Murray, Jackson; Baptist Women Directors/Secretaries, Ashley McCaleb, WMU staff, Jackson (first time offered separately); Mission Study Chairmen/Group Leaders, Vivian Taylor, Clara; Mission Support Chairmen/Group Leaders, Rose Mary Montgomery, Forest; Mission Action Chairmen/Group Leaders, Rebecca Williams, Gautier.

Baptist Young Women: All Officers, Joy Yates, Yazoo City; Monica Keathley, WMU staff, Jackson.

Acteens: Inexperienced Directors/Leaders, Jan Cossitt, WMU staff, Jackson; Experienced Directors/Leaders, Diane White, Meridian.

Girls in Action: Inexperienced Directors/Leaders, Toni Kee, Woodville; Experienced Directors/Leaders, Pat Crews, New Albany.

Mission Friends: Inexperienced Directors/Leaders, Trish Simmons, WMU staff, Jackson; Experienced Directors/Leaders, Betty Barber, Clinton (first time offered separately).

Church Admin. will offer "Back to School" conference

Just in time for the start of the school year the Church Administration Department offers a "Back to School" clinic in the northern part of Mississippi.

This conference will center in on children's needs, classroom techniques, and suggestions for the best use of the curriculum to meet the early learning needs of preschoolers.

This year that "Back to School" conference is hosted by First Church, Grenada, on Aug. 8. For more information or a registration blank please call or write the Church Administration Department of the Mississippi

Baptist Convention Board, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, telephone — 968-3800.

Two other statewide conferences are planned each year. The Church Weekday Education Conference at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly has just concluded for 1989. The 1990 conference dates for this three day conference are July 23-25.

Each spring a Saturday clinic is provided in Jackson. The attendance for this meeting topped 400 this year. Next spring this meeting will be hosted by Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, on March 3, 1990.

Mississippi will enter partnership with Illinois

(Continued from page 3)

noted that Illinois has 11.6 million people with about 160,000 Southern Baptists. "Illinois needs prayer, people and financial resources," wrote Swinford.

Possibilities for projects include construction teams for churches and state camp upgrading, leaders for conferences, sharing multi-media and computer expertise, choir tours and mission Vacation Bible School groups, and personal fellowship.

The Church Training Department was authorized by the Executive Committee to immediately begin using the new name Discipleship Training Department, as requested by department director Mose Dangerfield. Both the Sunday School Board

and the SBC meeting in Las Vegas authorized the change for the national program. Officially, the name change in Mississippi must go through constitutional revision.

Action of the Committee from January authorizing a retirement dinner and automobile gift for Earl Kelly was entered in the minutes with the two projects having cost \$26,284.92. Another \$3,352.18 was taken from Fund Balance to pay for attendance by 37 persons who attended a Witnessing, Giving Life Seminar either at Ridgecrest or Glorieta last year. And Bill Causey was authorized to purchase a car for up to \$18,500 with the money coming from Fund Balance and \$10,000 being returned on sale of Earl Kelly's present automobile.

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5

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SBC adopts ten resolutions

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (BP) — After a 40-minute delay of a Thursday morning business session on resolutions due to lack of a quorum, messengers to the 132nd session of the Southern Baptist Convention adopted with almost no changes 10 resolutions proposed by the Resolutions Committee.

The lack of a quorum was a first for an SBC meeting since a 25 percent quorum rule was established, effective with the 1988 convention meeting.

Resolutions on racism and encouraging laws regulating abortion generated the most debate before messengers adopted a motion by Rudy Yakym of Mishawauka, Ind., to limit discussion to five minutes per resolution.

After the adoption of three resolutions, a motion by Gerald Harris of Jackson, Miss., to adopt the remaining seven resolutions as a body failed by 13 votes. The vote was 2,648 to 2,635.

The following ten were adopted.

Resolution No. 1 — On Appreciation for Nevada Baptist Host

WHEREAS, The Southern Baptist Convention is meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, June 13-15, 1989, in commitment to our fellow Baptists in the West; and

WHEREAS, At the behest of our Home Mission Board with its strong emphasis on evangelism and personal soul-winning, many Baptists participated in an intense outreach effort to the people of Nevada; and

WHEREAS, An openness to the Gospel of Christ was manifested by the people of Nevada to this effort;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, That we the messengers of this 132nd session of the Southern Baptist Convention do express our appreciation to our Nevada Baptist hosts and encourage them to continue in the bold penetration of Nevada with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Resolution No. 2 — On Racism

WHEREAS, Southern Baptists have not always clearly stood for racial justice and equality; and WHEREAS, The growth in the racial and ethnic population of Southern Baptist life is a strong indicator of our growing diversity; and

WHEREAS, The Bible affirms that all people are created in the image of God and are therefore equal; and WHEREAS, All people need a saving relationship with God through Jesus Christ;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, That we the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, June 13-15, 1989, affirm our intention of standing publicly and privately for racial justice and equality.

Be it further RESOLVED, That we repent of any past bigotry and pray for those who are still caught in its clutches; and

Be it further RESOLVED, That we bear witness to the devastating impact of racism; and

Be it further RESOLVED, That we call upon individual Southern Baptists as well as our churches, to reach across racial boundaries, establishing fraternal rather than paternal friendships; and

Be it further RESOLVED, That we encourage Southern Baptist churches to observe Race Relations Sunday; and

Be it further RESOLVED, That our agencies and institutions seek diligently to bring about greater racial and ethnic representation at every level of Southern Baptist institutional life; and

And be it finally RESOLVED, That we as Southern Baptists renew our commitment to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with every individual in obedience to The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

Resolution No. 3 — On Encouraging Laws Regulating Abortion

WHEREAS, Southern Baptists have historically upheld the sanctity and worth of all human life, both born and pre-born, as being created, in the image of God; and

WHEREAS, the messengers to the annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention during the past decade have repeatedly reaffirmed their opposition to legalized abortion, except in cases where the mother's life is immediately threatened; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States in the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, and its progeny, denied the right of the fifty state legislatures and the Congress to protect the pre-born child by law; and

WHEREAS, the Court may now be willing to permit the states and the Congress once again to enact legislation regulating and restricting abortion.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, That we, the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in Las Vegas, June 13-15, 1989, do strongly urge the fifty state legislatures and the Congress to enact legislation to restrict the practice of induced abortion; and

Be it further RESOLVED, That we urge the Christian Life Commission and the various state Baptist conventions, and their Christian Life Committees, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention actively to promote the passage of such legislation; and

Be it finally RESOLVED, That we do reaffirm our opposition to legalized abortion, and our support of appropriate federal and state legislation and/or constitutional amendment which will prohibit abortion except to prevent the imminent death of the mother.

Resolution No. 4 — On Personal Ministry of the People of God

WHEREAS, 1988-89 is the Year of the Laity in Evangelism and Discipleship, sponsored by the Brotherhood Commission, Home Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union; and

WHEREAS, Market Place Evangelism and Market Place Ministry are major emphases of the Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board in 1990-91; and

WHEREAS, The years 1991-2000 have been designated as the Decade of the Laity by the Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board; and

WHEREAS, Bold Mission Thrust is focused on world evangelization by the year 2000; and

WHEREAS, Many countries of the world are closed to traditional missions approaches while remaining open to the influence of the people of God as they practice their vocational skills in said countries; and

WHEREAS, All believers in Jesus Christ are called to salvation, sanctification and service and are gifted for ministry to accomplish the work of God throughout the world;

Be it therefore RESOLVED, That the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, June 13-15, 1989, encourage the people of God to exercise their gifts in the personal ministries to which God has called them.

Be it further RESOLVED, That the people of God join hands and hearts in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world, recognizing that no single group of believers can do it alone.

Resolution No. 5 — On Integrity

WHEREAS, Issues of ethics and integrity have become more prevalent in recent days; and

WHEREAS, Some leaders in the public arenas of politics, business, government, academia and religion have been exposed as lacking integrity;

Be it RESOLVED, That we the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in

Las Vegas, Nevada, June 13-15, 1989, affirm our own unswerving commitment to absolute personal integrity so that we might be an example to the world and not bring reproach on the name of Christ;

Be it further RESOLVED, That we affirm the absolute necessity of Christians being above reproach, honest, trustworthy, and morally pure.

And, be it finally RESOLVED, That we affirm the Christian mandate to "be holy as the Lord is holy."

Resolution No. 6 — On Designating 1990 as the "International Year of Bible Reading"

WHEREAS, Baptists have been called a people of the Book and the Book is the Bible; and

WHEREAS, Baptists believe that the Bible is the inspired written record of God's revelation to men; and

WHEREAS, The Bible has made a unique contribution in shaping the United States as a distinctive and blessed Nation and people; and

WHEREAS, Deeply held religious convictions springing from the Holy Scriptures led to the early settlement of our Nation; and

WHEREAS, Many of our great national leaders paid tribute to the important influence the Bible has had in the development of our Nation; and

WHEREAS, History illustrates the value of voluntarily applying the teachings of the Scriptures in the lives of individuals, families, and societies; and

WHEREAS, The Bible provides a major source of hope for the poor and repressed people of the world; and

WHEREAS, The renewing of knowledge and faith in God through Scripture reading can strengthen international relationships; and

WHEREAS, Numerous individuals, organizations and denominations around the world are joining hands to encourage international Bible reading in 1990;

Be it therefore RESOLVED, That we, the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, June 13-16, 1989, call upon Southern Baptists to recognize the importance of reading through the entire Bible; and

Be it finally RESOLVED, That Southern Baptists participate in and encourage international Bible reading in 1990.

Resolution No. 7 — On "Here's Hope, Jesus Cares for You"

WHEREAS, our Southern Baptist Convention has set aside the fall of 1989 and the spring of 1990 for the Here's Hope Jesus Cares for You simultaneous revival emphasis; and

WHEREAS, The door of revival and spiritual awakening swings on the hinges of repentance, faith and concerted prayer by God's people; and

WHEREAS, Our nation evinces increasing need of revival; and

WHEREAS, A nationwide simultaneous revival emphasis presses to the forefront the perennial priority of evangelism through the use of the Evangelistic People Search and Scripture Distribution to locate prospects, training of soul winners, starting of new churches, strengthening of existing churches, and conducting of harvest revivals, all undergirded by Spirit empowered prayer; and

WHEREAS, The Here's Hope emphasis provides Southern Baptists one of the greatest opportunities in history to declare to our nation there is hope for every person in every situation for every need in the Lord Jesus Christ for He cares for them and so do Southern Baptists.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, That every church in the Southern Baptist Convention be encouraged to pray daily for spiritual awakening in our land, conduct at least one soul winning training event in the next year, challenge every Southern Baptist to win at least one per-

son to Christ and participate fully in the Here's Hope, Jesus Cares for You nationwide simultaneous revival emphasis.

Resolution No. 8 — On Drunk Driving

WHEREAS, 24,000 Americans were killed and another 534,000 were seriously injured in 1988 in alcohol-related traffic accidents; and

WHEREAS, An estimated 2 million people were arrested for drunk driving last year; and

WHEREAS, Almost two in every five Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related accident at some time in their lives; and

WHEREAS, Numerous annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention have spoken about the destructive effects of alcoholic beverages and the need for legislative action.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, That we, the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, June 13-15, 1989, express our strong support for the recommendations on drunk driving received by the U.S. Congress which call for an increased excise tax on alcoholic beverages, a sharp and immediate reduction in the legal blood-alcohol limits, an elimination of "happy hours," a halt to the use of celebrities which imply a link between drinking and athletic, social and sexual success, and a formation of a national coalition to conduct a national campaign against drunk driving; and

Be it further RESOLVED, That we urge Southern Baptist individuals, churches, and state conventions to contact immediately their U.S. Representatives and Senators, asking them to give leadership to and resources for the implementation of said recommendations that they have recently received; and

Be it further RESOLVED, That we urge the Christian Life Commission to work vigorously and in cooperation with other groups to support the recommendations and others to reduce the human wreckage resulting from drunk driving.

Resolution No. 9 — On China and In Support of Chinese Christians

WHEREAS, The people of China have once again been plunged into sorrow through internal violence and bloodshed; and

WHEREAS, The Christians of China have repeatedly affirmed their support for the basic aspirations for peace, justice, progress and full free expression; and

WHEREAS, Study and work abroad is causing the pain of separation for Chinese families during the crisis.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, That we call on all Southern Baptists to pray:

— that all parties involved may work for a peaceful solution to the current crisis in China which will provide the climate for peace, openness and democratic reform;

— for church leaders in China and for all Chinese Christians in their commitment to be salt, light and leaven in the dynamic processes of change,

— for the spread of the Gospel throughout all China as faithful Chinese Christians share their witness and God "uses all things to bring about His good."

Resolution No. 10 — On Drugs and Violence

WHEREAS, Illegal drug traffic (particularly crack cocaine) has accelerated over the past two years at an alarming rate; and

WHEREAS, Deaths related to drug overdoses (particularly crack cocaine) have continued to rise taking the lives of people that matter to God; and

WHEREAS, Drug related violence has escalated in our nation to the extent that people are at risk on the streets of America; and

WHEREAS, Drug related violent deaths in some of our major cities are almost double the rate at this point a year ago; and

WHEREAS, The consumption of the drug crack cocaine has become a major evil and moral menace to people from our nation's elementary schools to adult executives in corporate America.

Be it therefore RESOLVED, That the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada:

1) Urge local, state and federal governments to establish a task force to address these problems.

2) Urge all school systems in the United States to educate every student about the dangers of drug use and enforce tight restrictions on drug use in our schools.

3) Call upon the President of the United States to close the White House to celebrities whose lifestyles would promote approval and acceptance of drug use.

4) Encourage pharmaceutical companies to restrict, where possible, the sale of chemicals and materials used to produce illicit drugs.

5) Encourage the entertainment industry to exercise responsibility by not producing recordings, videos or movies that promote, endorse or condone drug use or violence.

6) Encourage families to serve as educational units to prepare children to deal with issues of drugs and violence.

After the adoption of the resolutions, Mark Coppenger, Resolutions Committee chairman, said he felt the committee succeeded in its goal of bringing resolutions on which messengers could agree.

Messengers proposed 51 resolutions which were considered by the committee along with three motions submitted to the Order of Business Committee and later ruled resolutions, for a total of 54.

Other resolutions offered

- On Covenanting Support of the Church and People of South Africa in their Stand for Freedom (David Waugh, Rumford, Rhode Island) No action taken.
- On Changing the Name of the Convention (Jim Guenther, Schenectady, New York) No action taken.
- On Halloween (Leo Lytle, Pineville, Louisiana) No action taken.
- On Halloween (Ray Johnson, Destin, Florida) No action taken.
- On Warning of Perestroika (Randall J. Runions, Ethridge, Tennessee) No action taken.
- On Peace (D. Montoya, Gravette, Arkansas) No action taken.
- On Support for Cooperative Program (Kiely D. Young, Greenville, Mississippi) No action taken.
- On Confessing Racism (Jim Hollady, Louisville, Kentucky) See Resolution No. 2
- On Condemning Government Funding of Immoral Practices (Kirk Shrewsbury, Tulsa, Oklahoma) No action taken.
- On Dominion Over Outer Space (Rufus Higginbotham, Dallas, Texas) No action taken.
- On Churches and Staff Conflict (Gerald Peters, Carnegie, Oklahoma) No action taken.
- On the Priesthood of the Believer (Hugh Wamble, Kansas City, Missouri) No action taken.
- On Support of Improving Educational Opportunities (Bob James, Corpus Christi, Texas) No action taken.

(Continued on page 8)

Mississippian to plant church in Las Vegas

Mr. and Mrs. Eric P. Griffin took up their assignment July 5 as church planter apprentices with the Home Mission Board, SBC, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The church they anticipate planting is one of 25 new ones envisioned by Southern Baptists for that city.

Pre-convention revivals and surveys in Las Vegas located interested residents whom the Griffins plan to contact. Also they will work with First Baptist Church, Las Vegas, which will "give" them two families from its membership to help begin a new congregation in expanding southwest Las Vegas.

Mrs. Griffin, the former Amy Frederick, is a Mississippian who grew up on the foreign mission field of Guadeloupe with her parents, Wayne and Florence Frederick. (Her father is now pastor of Jericho Church, Union County.) In 1979, at Ridgecrest, she made a commitment to missions. She is a 1980 graduate of Murrah High School, Jackson, and a 1985 graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi, with majors in computer science and French.

While employed by Texas Instruments in Dallas and General Dynamics, Fort Worth, she met Eric Griffin, a student at Southwestern Seminary. They were married in May, 1988.

In her early teens, Amy helped in Vacation Bible School and youth activities with her parents on the Caribbean French-speaking island of Guadeloupe.

"Most of her scripture memorization as a teenager was in French; she

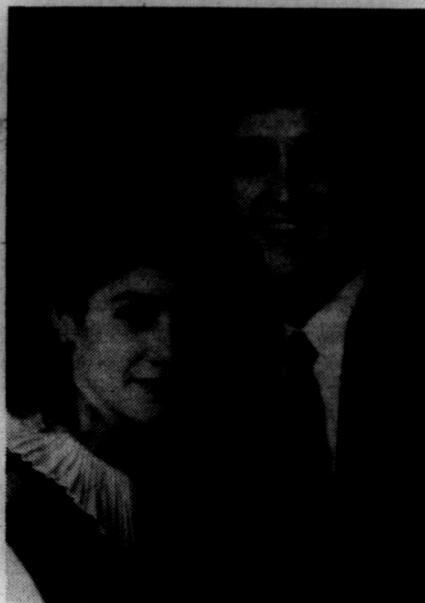
still falls back on that when groping for a scripture verse. Her experience of living in a different culture may stand her in good stead as she transplants her family from Mississippi/Texas/Georgia to Las Vegas," said her mother.

Amy plans to seek employment as an advanced computer programmer and will involve herself as much as she can in the work of church planting.

Eric, who grew up in Perry, Ga., was graduated from the University of Georgia. He majored in veterinary science with a career planned in that field until the Lord called him to preach. He was ordained to the ministry on June 25, 1989, by Beech Haven Baptist Church, Athens, Ga. Wayne Frederick, his father-in-law, gave the charge to the candidate.

Their church planting in Las Vegas will be a joint effort of the Home Mission Board, SBC; First Baptist Church, Las Vegas; the Las Vegas Baptist Association; and an Atlanta church which will help with expenses involved in the renting of a building in which to begin the anticipated new church.

The Home Mission Board gives support for two years to such new efforts as these, anticipating a functioning church at the end of such time. The Griffins say they sometimes wonder, "Can we do it two years before our support is terminated?" They have asked prayer support as they set up housekeeping, learn their way about, begin making those first contacts, and Amy seeks employment to supplement their income.



Amy and Eric Griffin

Homecomings

Antioch, Columbus: July 16; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; morning worship, 11 a.m. with preaching by former pastor Joe Joyner, now pastor of Westmeade Church, Decatur, Ala.; churchwide luncheon, noon; Jimmy Harrington, pastor.

Shady Grove, Hazlehurst: July 30; Old Fashioned Day with basket lunch at noon in Fellowship Hall; 1:30 p.m., program, special singing; Estus Mason, interim pastor.

Off the Record

Boss: "Did you write 'Fragile—This Side Up' on the carton before shipping it out?"

Clerk: "Yes, sir. And to make sure that everyone saw it, I marked it on all six sides."

Staff changes

Jack Nazary has retired from West Jackson Church, Jackson, as pastor and is available for supply, revivals, and interim pastor. He can be reached at Route 5, Box 125C, Carthage, MS 39051. The telephone number is 267-8406.

Cliff Temple Church, Natchez, has recently called B. Don Womble as its pastor. He is the former pastor of Causeyville Church, Lauderdale County.

Bobby Wedgeworth has resigned as pastor of West Gulfport Church, Gulfport. He will lead in the development of new work in the Robinwood Forest area.

Juniper Grove Church, Poplarville, has called Tim Hawkins as minister of music and youth. He is attending New Orleans Seminary.

Bayou View Church, Gulfport, has called Tim Hisaw as full-time minister of education and youth. He previously served the church as minister of youth while attending seminary.

First Church, Pass Christian, has called Don Bearden as pastor, effective June 18. He will live in Mobile until his wife, Jan, finishes nursing school.

LaVerne Summerlin moved to Concord Church, Pelahatchie, as pastor on June 23. He served Cooperville Church in Morton for the past four years. He is a graduate of Clarke College, Blue Mountain College, and New Orleans Seminary.

Country Woods Church, 6737 Siwel Road, Jackson, has called Gary M. Bunch as its first full-time pastor effective July 2.

Bunch, a native of Starkville, is a graduate of Mississippi State University and Southern Seminary. He has been the pastor of Irvington Church, Irvington, Ky., for five years. Country Woods started out as a mission of Morrison Heights Church in Clinton.

Tim Nabors, a native of Denton, Tex., has joined the staff of the Family Life Center of First Church, Jackson, as associate minister of activities. Nabors has previously served First Church, Corsicana, Tex., and First Church, Athens, Tex., as minister of activities.

Douglas Whit has assumed the pastorate of First Church, Waynesboro, effective June 5. He moved from a nine year pastorate at Airport Boulevard Church, Mobile Ala.

White

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld. The withholding of names will be at the discretion of the editor.

Ridgeway's 25th

Editor:

Ridgeway Church, Vicksburg, will be celebrating its 25th anniversary Aug. 27.

We also will observe homecoming at the same time.

The members of Ridgeway are seeking the names and addresses of former pastors and members of Ridgeway Baptist Church. Those who know the names and addresses of any former members or pastors of the church are asked to write Ridgeway Baptist Church, Route 3, Box 213 E, Vicksburg, Miss. 39180 or call 636-4149.

Michael Hunt, pastor
Ridgeway Church, Vicksburg

Church staff position

Editor:

Mt. Olive Baptist Church of Live Oak, Florida, is in search of a staff person for a full-time position in the areas of education, youth, and music. Salary, benefits, and house provided. Interested persons should mail an updated resume to Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Rt. 2, Box 152A, Live Oak, Florida 32060. Phone: 904-963-5603.

Thank you for your assistance.

Lewis Gooch, pastor
Mt. Olive Baptist Church
Live Oak, Fla.

Lord used Vegas

Editor:

I have just come back from the convention. I was of like mind as so many other people. I was skeptical. I can see, however, where our Lord really used it. It was the best convention I have ever attended.

Many have asked, "Why Vegas, that great, wicked city?" I can see now, and I tell them, that Vegas is no more wicked than any other city. It is just more visible.

Being in Las Vegas caused people to see a greater need of witnessing, so in the results of the planning and urgency of witnessing many hundreds of homes were contacted and many precious souls came to receive Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord. For those who wonder, Why Vegas, the Lord used this to get a great witnessing campaign to be held ahead of every convention. Hundreds of people flooded the area with gospel tracts; and, as said, hundreds of homes were invaded with the gospel, resulting in hundreds of people coming to receive Christ Jesus as savior and Lord.

The impact shook the whole country. People of the local churches said that it was the greatest thing ever to happen to that part of the country and that the effect of it would be a great

help to their churches.

We are thankful to the planning committee and our great God. We must pray more than ever the prayer of faith for all of our leaders in our churches and convention and leaders of our nation. We have a great job to do getting souls into the kingdom, so we must occupy the land until our Lord comes and carries the redeemed home.

Carey Paul Douglas
Wesson

Views on women's role

Editor:

I am deeply concerned over Mr. Robert S. Leigh's letter published in the June 8 Baptist Record. My concern is not over his position on women's role in the church but over his attempt to rewrite one passage in the Scripture instead of developing his position from other passages that emphasize leadership roles of women.

Lydia, in Acts 16:14, seems to be the leader of these women meeting by the riverside. In Acts 18:26, the Greek text, the R.S.V., N.I.V. and the Amplified all list Priscilla's name first in their instruction of Apollos, although the K.J. translators reversed this. Acts 21:9 records the fact that Philip had four virgin daughters who did prophesy. In Romans 16:1, Phoebe is referred to as a servant, but the Greek word is deaconess. In 1 Timothy 3:11, the word translated wife (wives) appears 221 times in the N.T. and is translated woman (women) 128 times and wife (wives) 93 times, depending on the context and at times the choice could be debated.

Those of us who question the ordina-

tion of women have to struggle with our interpretation of these passages, but we cannot rewrite the Bible to justify our position.

If the Bible is inspired, and I believe it is, then the message is timeless. We can and must seek to "rightly divide the word," but we must never seek to change that word.

Mr. Leigh's views may be valid, but his approach is destructive to the authority of the Scripture.

Ken Pickens
Vicksburg

"Divided we fall"

In his short statement, "United we stand, divided we fall!" Abe Lincoln shows how important it is for cooperation to exist among individuals with common purposes. But long before Abe Lincoln, cooperation and fellowship were seen as a most important necessity—especially among the early churches.

If ever there was a time when Southern Baptists ought to be cooperating and concentrating on their main objective, that time is today. If Southern Baptists are to face a situation in which the choice is Christ or chaos, then ALL Southern Baptists need to concentrate on the all important things and let the lesser things go.

Liberal, fundamentalist, conservative, centrist, etc., the labels which we attach to people in order to divide them into opposing parties, must go. Whatever our approach to it, we are all, or should be, lovers of the Word of God.

We often seem to be so busy argu-

ing amongst ourselves that we forget that we are all supposed to be fighting against the devil and his angels. We are not members of any group or party. We are Christians; and unless Christians stand united, we cannot resist evil as we ought.

Priesthood of believers, questions of ordination, and the validity of each other's orders, we must let them all go. That the world is becoming increasingly pagan while we pursue our private warfares and theological arguments is the tragedy of the divided body of Christ.

There is a time to remember history and a time to forget history. When history is remembered as an inspiration, it is good; when history is remembered as a means of maintaining divisions, it is a curse. We are in a position today when the Church is on the whole an ageing and shrinking community. We are in a situation when the advancing tide of paganism and secularism is running strongly.

It is time to let a great many things go and remember the one thing on which there must be concentration—the fact that we stand for Jesus Christ in an increasingly Christless world.

It is my prayer that this shall be our challenge and our goal as we make that COMMITMENT NOW to begin doing what we know we SHOULD. "UNITED WE STAND—DIVIDED WE FALL!"

A. Carl Funderburk, Jr.
Pastor, FBC, McHenry

Good judgment comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgment.—The Bordentown (N.J.) Register News

SBC adopts ten resolutions

(Continued from page 6)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 14. On Chinese Students
(George D. Uribe II, Raleigh, North Carolina)
See Resolution No. 9 | 30. On Intercessory Prayer for World Revival
(Finlay S. Graham, Dallas, Texas)
No action taken. |
| 15. On Anti-Lottery
(Seth Farley, Bowling Green, Kentucky)
No action taken. | 31. On the Unity of Southern Baptists
(Dan Mullins, Dayton, Ohio)
No action taken. |
| 16. On ACTS Network
(R. Chip Turner, Alexandria, Louisiana)
No action taken. | 32. On the Youth Ministers' Conference
(Thomas E. Ratliff, Bradenton, Florida)
No action taken. |
| 17. On Prayer for People of China
(Russ Barker, Avondale, Georgia)
See Resolution No. 9 | 33. On Priesthood of the Believer
(Herbert Wilson, Louisville, Kentucky)
No action taken. |
| 18. On Mobility Impaired
(Cherri Hill, Wharton, Texas)
No action taken. | 34. On Having No Resolutions
(Ed Harrison, Jr., Pine Bluff, Arkansas)
No action taken. |
| 19. On Support for Christian Television
(Mark Frees, Sledge, Mississippi)
No action taken. | 35. On Child Care
(Susan Glover, St. Louis, Missouri)
No action taken. |
| 20. On Campaigning for SBC Office
(Billy Bolden, Shreveport, California)
No action taken. | 36. On Concern for Children Who Die of Hunger
(David F. White, Orangeburg, South Carolina)
No action taken. |
| 21. On Islam
(Kirk Shrewsbury, Tulsa, Oklahoma)
No action taken. | 37. On Church and Equality of Believer
(Bill Johnson, Ardmore, Oklahoma)
No action taken. |
| 22. On 300th Anniversary of London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689
(Timothy Squire, Brooklet, Georgia)
No action taken. | 38. On Messengers Occupying Only One Chair
(Barbara B. Lloyd, Lynchburg, Virginia)
No action taken. |
| 23. On Home Schooling
(C. Brandt Smith, Jr., Paragould, Arkansas)
No action taken. | 39. On Priesthood of Believer
(David B. Hardesty, Pittsburg, California)
No action taken. |
| 24. On Seeking SBC Offices
(Ron Flurry, Shreveport, Louisiana)
No action taken. | 40. On Request That Baptist Seminaries, Colleges, Universities, and Academies Hire Committed Christians
(Fred Holt, North Carolina)
No action taken. |
| 25. On Abortion
(Ken Sodergren, Reedville, Virginia)
See Resolution No. 3 | 41. On Request of a Commendation for Dr. Lewis Drummond
(Bill Pace, Florida)
No action taken. |
| 26. On Against Experimentation with Aborted Babies
(Carol A. Sutton, state unknown)
No action taken. | 42. On Request to Affirm the Direction of the Home Mission Board
(Roddy Williams, Kentucky)
No action taken. |
| 27. On Campuchia/Cambodia
(Sok Doeung, Fort Worth, Texas)
No action taken. | 43. On Request for Prayer and Encouragement for Dr. Billy Graham
(Ernest Carswell, South Carolina)
No action taken. |
| 28. On Ambassador to Vatican
(Bob Patterson, Warm Springs, Georgia)
No action taken. | 44. On Request for Prayer for President Bush
(Elmer Foust, Georgia)
No action taken. |
| 29. On Divorced Spouses of Those in Ministry
(Mark Wilcox, Whitharral, Texas)
No action taken. | |

Names in the news



Pybas

Pamela F. Pybas, of Madison, who graduated from Southwestern Seminary, May 12, is the new minister to Middle School Students at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga.

New Hope Church, Yalobusha County, on Memorial Day, June 4, had two members present who have been members of that church for 81 years, reports Eugene Spearman. The two joined the church at the same time and have been in regular attendance and devoted to their church for those 81 years, according to Spearman. They are Mrs. Claudine Hyde Spearman, age 92, and Mrs. Lena Murphree, age 94. The two, who are cousins, live at Route 2, Coffeerville.



Calvary Church, Louisville, ordained **Sterling Davis** to the gospel ministry on June 11. Presenting certificate is Kent H. Cochran, pastor (right). Also, presented was a Bible.

This was the first member of our church to enter the ministry.

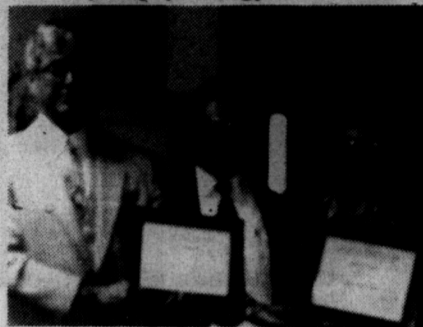
Mississippi Baptist activities

July 16 Women's Recognition Sunday (CAC Emphasis)
June 17-29 Simultaneous Backyard Bible Clubs/Mission VBS (SS)

Clarke has faculty vacancies

Clarke College has faculty openings beginning in the fall for instructors in the areas of history and psychology according to the college dean, James Read. Those interested in either of these two positions need to have at least a master's degree in the area (history or psychology) with at least

18 graduate hours in the field. Individuals interested in either one of these two positions need to call (601-683-2061) or write (P. O. Box 440, Newton, MS 39345) James C. Read, dean of the college.



Rosados assigned to Montana

Sam and Anita Rosado were commissioned to the Mission Service Corps on May 7, in a service conducted by Jerry Masterson.

The Rosados have been members of Brodie Road Church, Biloxi, since its beginning in December of 1981. He is a retired Civil Service worker and she is an LPN.

They have been assigned to the Montana Rescue Mission in Billings, Montana. Pictured, left to right, are Masterson, pastor, Sam Rosado and Anita Rosado.

Smiths retire from Indonesia

John and Nell Smith, missionaries to Indonesia for many years, will retire on August 1. Their address in the United States will be Rt. 2, Box 264B, Bogue Chitto, MS 39629 (phone 734-6168).

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First Church, Senatobia's GAs (above center) recently honored two young men who are summer BSU missionaries. Hugh Freeze, left, will serve in Utah. Allen Spencer, right, will serve in North Dakota. Both are active in youth work at First, Senatobia.



North Ripley Church, Ripley, burned the note on its addition building on April 30. Seven years ago the congregation stepped out on faith to add more room to their church. The membership of about 300, after much prayer, not knowing how they could pay the loan of about \$70,000, borrowed the money. "The congregation held to God's promise in Matthew 21:22, 'And all things, whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive,'" says Nancy Benefield, church reporter.

Pictured, left to right, are Terry Wooley, Charles Hill, Clyde Bennett, Johnny Childs, Elbert Timmons, and G. W. Lindsey. Donald Dunahue is pastor.

Glendale Church, Leland, held Vacation Bible School, June 5-9. The school had an enrollment of 94 with an average attendance of 84 and five professions of faith. This broke a 12 year record in average attendance. Edward Pendergrast is pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Benton, held Vacation Bible School June 19-23. They had 24 children and 15 workers daily. The closing night program was held June 25. John Schoolar, pastor, was the director.

Camp Ground Church, Water Valley, recently completed its Vacation Bible School with 45 average attendance and a Sunday night program. Hazel Methvin was director.

Vacation Bible School will be held at Carmel Church, Monticello, July 17-21, at 8:30-11:30 a.m. and youth from 6:30-8:30 p.m. For details about the church bus, call 587-7145 or 587-2672. Sammy J. McDonald III is pastor.

Challenge To Build, a capital needs fund raising program, has just been completed at Roseland Park Church of Picayune. Nearly 200 families committed over \$522,000 to be given during the next three years. The intensive, three month campaign was led by James Spencer, pastor, and by Glen Rogers, CTB director.

The new facility will provide additional education space, a fellowship hall with industrial kitchen and a new administrative suite, enabling Roseland Park to better serve and minister to her growing membership and the community at large.

Construction of the new building is to begin as soon as plans are finalized.

Vacation Bible School will be held at Southside Church, Jackson, July 16-21. The hours will be Sunday, 5 to 8 p.m., Mon.-Fri., 6 to 8:30 p.m. Bible Study will be for preschool through adults. The theme for the week will be "Gather the People." Donald N. Bozeman is pastor.

Concord Church, Yazoo City, held Vacation Bible School, June 5-9, with an average attendance of 95 and high attendance of 104. There were 65 children enrolled. Ralph Cain is pastor.

Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, will present Gary McSpadden in concert on Saturday night, July 15, at 7 p.m. This is a part of the Saturday Nights at Morrison Heights concert series.



McSpadden

Tickets for adults are \$5, and for children, \$3. Morrison Heights is located at 201 Morrison Drive, Clinton. For more information, call 924-5620.

Satartia, Satartia: July 16-21; Barry Ward, pastor, Antioch Church, Simpson County, evangelist; Wanda Woods and Barbara Hicks, musicians; services at 7 p.m. each evening; Douglas McDonald, pastor.

Camp Ground (Yalobusha): July 16-19; 7:30 nightly; Troy Hurdle, supply pastor, evangelist; Tony Moore, music director, Windale, Terry, music.

Shiloh (Montgomery): July 16-19; services, 7:30 each night; Marton Jacks, preaching; Frank Roberson, pastor.

Mt. Olivet, Forest: July 16-19; Sunday, homecoming, dinner served, services, 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Kevin Jones, evangelist; Travis Polk, pastor.

Cross Roads (Rankin): July 16-21; services 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Sun.; 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. during week; Rickey Kennedy, pastor at Meadow Grove Church, Brandon, evangelist; Thomas Norris Moore, song leader; Wayne Crenshaw, pastor.

Revival results

Hope (Neshoba): June 22-24; three professions of faith; Charles Rogers, East Philadelphia, evangelist; William Crenshaw, music; James Young, pastor.

Mission Hill (Lincoln): July 16-21; Sunday, 11 a.m., followed with lunch in fellowship hall, afternoon service, 1:15 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Vann Windom, evangelist.

Mt. Zion (Leake): July 9-14; 7:30 p.m.; Eddie Pilgrim, evangelist from Pearl Hill; Paul Jordan, pastor.

Laurel Hill, Philadelphia: July 16-21; 7 p.m.; Lee Hudson, evangelist; Dudley Winstead, music; Lester M. Jeffers, pastor.

Steele, Forest: July 16-21; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Bill Henderson, evangelist; Tom Fox, pastor.

Devotional

Open hands or tight fists?

By Larry Cox
Deuteronomy 15:11

It's hard to find wool clothing in the summertime, but my second son was participating in a missions trip in the Teton Mountains, and he had to have the proper clothes. Having given up on finding these items in the malls and discount stores, I decided to try a used clothing store.

As I got out of my car in the parking lot of a local thrift store, an elderly man standing by the door watched me attentively. Walking toward the door, I knew I was about to be approached by a beggar. That feeling of dread came over me.

Like most people, I don't like to deal with beggars, and I don't like them putting me on the spot. I'd rather mail in my contribution.

He asked me for 27¢ to complete the price of something he wanted to buy, and I thought that was an unusual amount to request.

Knowing all the time that this guy was probably a wino, I pulled two quarters from my pocket, gave them to the man, and hurried into the thrift shop. I had fulfilled my Christian obligation. I even gave him more than he requested.

After entering the store and beginning to sort through the pants, I heard the bells on the door sound. As I glanced toward the door, I saw the beggar walk straight to the check-out desk and give the clerk the 50¢.

I watched in astonishment as the clerk counted out the man's change and placed a pair of pants in a used bag. As the beggar turned from the clerk's counter, he caught my eye and smiled at me.

"... You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor..." My fists were almost too tight to help someone in need. That smile still haunts me.

Cox is assistant to the president, Mississippi College.



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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMENTARIES

When life doesn't seem fair, rely on God's justice

By Randall L. VonKanel

Psalm 73:1-3, 13-14, 16-17, 21-28

Within the context of a worship experience, the psalmist discovers an answer for his doubts and a renewal of his faith. The key verse for our



VonKanel

consideration this week is Psalm 73:26: "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." When life seems to be a continuous episode of unfairness, and when doubt carves a hole in your faith, the importunate need is to realize the all-sufficiency of God through a personal response of worship. Christians must act upon the experiential truth that Jesus Christ is Lord of all and sufficient for all.

Psalm 73 is a confession of doubt and struggle. In the Christian life, we are not immune to doubt. The psalmist identifies a major source of our contemporary doubt — comparing our sufferings and struggles with the apparently carefree and happy life of the non-Christian.

LIFE AND WORK

How do we reconcile the "it doesn't get any better than this" lifestyle of the unrighteous with the all-too-common life of suffering and want experienced at times by the believer? The answer lies in the discovery made by the psalmist.

Why do the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper? In Psalm 73:1-3, the psalmist brings this question into focus. Beginning with a present affirmation of faith (73:1), he uses a flashback to relate his pilgrimage from doubt to faith. Admitting that he almost stumbled and pursued the path of the wicked, he presents the difficult problem that he faced. The problem was twofold: (1) The wicked were prospering (73:3); and (2) the righteous were suffering (73:13-14). In spite of his best efforts at being pure and innocent, the psalmist complained, "For all day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." This was a great perplexity and a cause for doubt. So it remains

today! In a world that emphasizes health and wealth, many Christians struggle with the reality that their paths do not lead to material prosperity. The temptation to succumb to a "health and wealth" gospel, one that elevates self and selfish desires, is ever present. Jesus calls us to his Lordship. In Luke 9:23, he charged, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

The answer for the psalmist came when he "went into the sanctuary." In Psalm 73:16-17, God revealed to the worshiper the truth about the wicked. In the verses following (73:18-20), the wicked are seen as those who are facing destruction. As he worshipped God, the psalmist was given revelation as to the justice of God. Man may escape the justice and judgment of man, but he can be sure that "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap (Galatians 6:7)."

The righteous man is affirmed as he contemplates his relationship to God. When at the pit of despair (73:21-22) the psalmist considered the privilege and potential of being in right rela-

tionship with God (73:23-24); he rejoiced in his renewed faith. In verse 25, he affirms the pre-eminence of God over anything material. In verse 26, he extols the power of God for his every need. Though death itself should come, the psalmist rested in his eternal inheritance. God was his all in all. Life did not consist of things possessed, but rather in being in fellowship with God. In contrast, the psalmist understood that "they that are far off from thee shall perish."

In the vital moment of worship, God's justice is revealed. We must "rely upon God's justice" when we face the apparent inequities of life. We must not look around at what others have or at what is happening to others, but we must look up to him. And then, we must tell others about him!

Please help us, Lord, to see
That it is not what we have,
or don't have,
That matters,
But, Who we have in you! (RVK)

VonKanel is pastor, First, Hattiesburg.

Leviticus: laws concerning sacrifice

By R. Raymond Lloyd

Leviticus 1:1-6:7

Leviticus is described by one as "the last book of the Bible I would choose to study!" Because it deals with ritual and legal detail, it has been



Lloyd

laid aside by many as having nothing to say to twentieth century Christians. Leviticus, however, is a tremendous practical guidebook. It was for Israel. It is for us. The key verse of the book is "Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the Lord am holy; and I have set you apart from the people to be Mine" (20:26). This is simply a restatement of the covenant promise of Exodus 19:6. Here Israel is shown the specifics of how to work out in the routine of daily living their priestly call — becoming a holy people. It has to do with the horror of sin, the grace of forgiveness, the conduct of worship, and the lifestyle of man. All of these which were essential for Israel to understand, are equally essential for the Christian to understand. Israel was to be a holy people serving a holy God. The church has no demand placed on her. Hence is can become a most relevant, even exciting, book to claim our sincere attention.

BIBLE BOOK

The laws of sacrifice

With surprising suddenness we are thrust right into the "Manual of Sacrifice," dealing with burnt, cereal, peace, sin, and guilt offerings. Here God makes known the kind of worship that is pleasing to him.

In his study of Hosea, Norman Snaith points out that sacrifice in the Old Testament falls into three categories: a gift to God, an expression of communion, and an expiation for sin. These are clearly seen in each of the sacrifices detailed in our text.

Burnt Offering (1:1-17). This sacrifice, the one most prevalent in Israel, is distinctive in that it is totally burned by fire. As such, it is conceived of as a gift which was made wholly to God. The offerer kept nothing back for himself or his family. It is a gift given in gratitude for God's great deliverance of the Exodus, but it is also a gift that outwardly expresses total surrender.

The fact that the victim is to be "without blemish" (vs. 3) clearly implies that it is to be the best of the flock. Therefore, it is to be a costly gift. "I will not offer burnt offering unto the Lord my God which cost me nothing" (2 Sam. 24:24). The depth of our gratitude to God is directly measured by the costliness of our gifts

of time, resources, and service.

Here the laying of hands on the head of the animal is the symbolic means whereby the worshipper personally offers himself to God. The idea of the transferral of sins is not dealt with until the "scapegoat" passage in chapter 16. Paul make the New Testament application in Romans 12:1.

Cereal Offering (2:1-16). This also appears to have little to do with sin, but is primarily a gift to God, at the cost of man's time, labor, and energy, acknowledging God's ownership of all.

Peace Offering (3:1-17). The basic meaning of the word "peace" (shalom) means wholeness, harmoniousness, completeness, and is here used for a sacrifice that reflects the harmonious nature of those in joyous fellowship with God and with man. These first three offerings are given by those who are "in fellowship" with God.

Sin Offering (4:1-5:13). The next two sacrifices are for those out-of-fellowship with God. Sin separates from God, whether it be the sin of "priest" (4:1-12), the "whole congregation" (13-21), a "leader" (22-26), or "anyone of the common people" (27-35). Strict instructions are given to offer this sacrifice whenever sin causes a breach of the fellowship between God and man.

This sacrifice is the one offered on the Day of Atonement (Chapter 16). Its purpose was atonement to cleanse the sinner and restore

him to fellowship with God.

This sin offering was only for sins committed "unintentionally." Perhaps the idea of a wandering sheep, drifting from one hillside to another with no sense of direction best depicts the meaning of the word. But sin, even unintentional sin, is a terrible thing in the eyes of God and must be confessed and one for which God required a sacrifice. The opposite is the deliberate sin or sin "with a high hand" (Num. 15:30-31) for which the Old Testament knows no sacrifice. The sacrificial system of the Old Testament demonstrates its own limitations and points beyond the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; and "cleanses us from all unrighteousness," both unintentional and intentional.

Tresspass Offering (5:14-6:7). The specific nature of this sacrifice is that it deals with sins against a neighbor (which are also sins against God). Before the sacrifice could be offered, full restitution was to be made by the guilty party, plus 20 percent.

How wonderful to realize the incredible mercy and grace of God for those out of fellowship with God that provides at-one-ment with himself through the forgiveness of our sins. But that forgiveness is only available when we confess our sins and set right our relationships with others, namely "make restitution." There is no such thing as "cheap grace."

Lloyd is pastor, First, Starkville.

God calls; Gideon grows in courage

By Billy R. Williams

Judges 6:11-16, 25-29, 32

God's people should never allow feelings of fear or inadequacy to prevent them from responding to a call to service or an opportunity



Williams

for ministry. In the passage for the week it is evident in God's call of Gideon that he uses people who may not be courageous or confident. Gideon seemed to be anything but a "mighty man of valour." When God appeared to him by means of a "theophany" (an appearance of God in angelic or human form), Gideon, fearful of the Midianites, was threshing wheat in a secluded winepress rather than on an open hillside (verse 11).

Because of seven years of raids by these marauders, Gideon felt that God had abandoned Israel (verse 13). When God issued the call to Gideon to become the deliverer of his people (verse 14), he responded by listing his inadequacies. He was the least member of an unimportant family from an insignificant tribe

UNIFORM

(verse 15). Such were his feelings of inadequacy that Gideon requested a sign affirming his call (verse 17).

How could God speak of one so lacking in courage as a "mighty man of valour?" The Lord saw Gideon not for what he was at the moment but rather for what he could become through divine power if he accepted God's call. Furthermore, God helped Gideon to respond positively and courageously by giving him several assurances. These assurances can help any Christian who faces a task for which he feels inadequate. First, God assured Gideon that his was a divine call, "... Have not I sent thee (verse 14)?" There is no greater source of boldness than to know one has been sent by God. Second, the Lord assured Gideon that he would always be with him in the performance of his task, "Surely I will be with thee..." (verse 16). For any reluctant servant caught up in his own inadequacies, what better comfort than to know that the Lord is with him always. Third, God assured Gideon that victory would be his. Defeating the Midianites would be as

easy as defeating one person (verse 16). The Christian needs to remember he is on the winning side. Finally, if these assurances were not enough and for Gideon they were not, God gave a sign to confirm Gideon's call (verse 21). God can and does give signs for affirmation. However, one should remember that in Gideon's case this need for assurance was an indication of a weak faith.

As will happen to all who make a commitment to the Lord, Gideon was put to the test. On that very night, God gave him his first task (verse 25-26). It is significant that it involved the destruction of an altar to Baal erected by Gideon's father Joash. True repentance always involves cleansing first within the home. Furthermore, there was no greater test of Gideon's courage than for him to take issue against his family and peers. Though he completed his task at night for fear of his family and townspeople, he did obey the Lord's directive. Gideon broke with the culture within which he lived by destroying the altar to Baal, erecting on the very site an altar to God, and then offering a sacrifice to the Lord upon his new altar (verse 27). In these acts the superiority of God over Baal was symbolically portrayed.

There is an important lesson to be gained from the reaction of the people of Ophrah to Gideon's deed. When they learned of the destruction of the altar — which was probably a public altar — they sought Gideon's death (verse 30). When a person takes a stand for God, he must be prepared for criticism, opposition, and even hostility. Christians should never be surprised by the negative reaction of a godless world.

There is, however, a surprising and encouraging reaction on the part of Gideon's father Joash. He saved his son's life by suggesting to the people that if Baal were a god, he would take his own vengeance against Gideon (verse 31). Perhaps the courageous actions of his son inspired their father to boldness. Often others are emboldened by the courage of someone else.

From this incident, Gideon received the nickname "Jerubbaal," which probably meant "Let Baal contend for himself." The name became a witness to the superiority of the God of Israel over the false gods of Canaan and to the courage of the man who bore the name. If believers walk in courageous commitment, the name "Christian" will become a daily witness to the saving power of Christ.

Williams is pastor, First, Gautier.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

The Baptist Children's Village

Paul N. Nunnery, Executive Director

P. O. Box 27, Clinton, MS 39060-0027, (601) 922-2242

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of the Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

Mar. 9, 1989 -
May 19, 1989

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To be continued



RECENT REPRESENTATIVE CHURCH GIFTS

BRADFORD CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH, Gore Springs, Calhoun Baptist Association, Rev. Billy Nelson, pastor led his church to give \$1,000.00 to The Village and personally delivered the check on May 4, 1989 as church members toured The India Nunnery Campus, the central, administrative and distribution center.

SKENE BAPTIST CHURCH, Skene, Boliver Baptist Association, Rev. Billy Floyd, pastor. A check credited to our MOTHER'S DAY offering was received for \$706.42.

COLLINS BAPTIST CHURCH, Collins, Covington Baptist Association, Rev. Don Dobson, pastor. The MOTHER'S DAY offering amounted to \$1,132.50.

OAK GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Mendenhall, Simpson Baptist Association, Rev. Glenn Kelly, pastor. The church sent \$685.00 for Village support.

BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH, Walnut, Alcorn Baptist Association, Rev. Joe Earl Spencer, pastor. An offering of \$630.34 was received for The Village.

The children, staff, trustees and administration sincerely thank all our pastors, staffs and congregations for prayerful financial support.

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Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



Hong Kong Christians mourn for China

By Lounette Templeton

"Missionaries can do anything!"

Part II

"I was looking for a wife; I needed one right away," he said. His first wife had died in a car wreck, leaving him as the lone parent of Ky, 5, and Vince, 2. Vic Johnston, McComb native, was remembering a time when he was still minister of youth and activities at First Church, Kosciusko.

When he saw Sharon Blackwell play volleyball, he noted she was an enthusiastic competitor — and a pretty one. Questions put to Sharon's brother-in-law produced the information that she was a sixth grade school teacher, secretary of the city's church basketball league, and daughter of a Baptist pastor, Joe Blackwell of Williamsville.

Afterward, when Sharon got home late one night, her mother said, "Brother Vic has called two or three times. It must be important." Probably church business, Sharon concluded. Though it was late, she called back. To her surprise, he invited her to dinner. On their first date, they toured Central Hills.

They had not been married long when he began to sound her out about her feelings on being a missionary. He told her he'd been on some volunteer mission trips to Montana and asked, "Would you be willing to serve there?" She'd been a Home Mission Board summer missionary to Florida. "Yes," she said, Montana would be all right.

When they had been married only six months, he said to her, "I think the Lord is calling me to a foreign country." It worried him that nine out of ten ministers work in the U.S. and only one goes elsewhere.

"No way," she felt at first. Already drastic change had taken over her life. From school teaching, she'd suddenly become wife (of a church staff member!) and mother of two children. It was too soon for such an enormous second life change. However, she did agree for them to tell the Foreign Mission Board of their potential interest.

To her relief, the Board responded, "Wait six more months. We don't take applications of any couples until they have been married at least a year." That gave her the time she needed, to pray and to adjust to the idea of more change. By then, she felt that Vic's call was also her call.

A couple of months ago, at the missionary home in Forest, she laughed as she said to me, "He volunteered. I surrendered."

Vic kept running into missionaries to Brazil. "I felt Brazil was my place," he said. And in 1983 that's where they were appointed. They studied Portuguese in Campinas in 1984 and then went to Teresina, Piaui, where he is youth worker and director of a camp. Last week I wrote about some of the agricultural projects he plans to undertake this term.

During their first furlough, they were the first missionaries to occupy Forest's missionary house. (The USM and N.O. Seminary grad had been minister of youth and education at Forest in earlier years.)

I got a tour of that pale yellow two-story house. All the floor space is fantastic. High-ceilinged living and din-



Davy, in Vic's lap, doesn't want his picture made so soon after a nap. Beside the two are Sharon holding Jennifer; Vince; and Ky.

ing rooms flank a central hallway, all furnished with antiques. A cozy den and kitchen lie just behind those; and I don't know how many bedrooms and baths upstairs and down, plus a game room upstairs.

Before W.D. and I left Forest that rainy afternoon, three of the Johnston children had come home from school — Ky 13; Vince, 10½; Jennifer, 6. The fourth one, Davy, 4, awoke from his nap.

Now they are back in Teresina and Toni Anderson, Virginia journeyman, will be teaching Vince and Jennifer in September, while Ky studies at Fortaleza, eight hours away.

Sharon, who has a degree in voice from Union University, Jackson, Tenn., often sings at weddings, graduation exercises, and similar occasions. In church services, she plays the pump organ. Also she teaches a women's Sunday School class. During furlough, she enrolled in MasterLife. "This was for my own spiritual growth," she said, "and to help me in Teresina. I plan to use the Survival Kit first, to disciple women. Young women can come to my house (for discipleship training). Married ones will probably meet at the church, and bring their children with them."

Soon after the Johnstons arrived in Brazil, before they could speak Portuguese well, Vic was invited to perform a wedding ceremony. "I found a short one — and read it!" he recalled. "Brazilians think missionaries can do anything!"

When it comes to the Johnstons, I think maybe the Brazilians are right!

Since the above was written, a letter has arrived from the Johnstons. Here are a few quotes from Vic: "We have been working hard trying to make our house livable again. Our yard looked like a jungle and the house was very dirty. Some rats had made a mess in several cabinets and had eaten a hole in the insulation in the bottom of our refrigerator."

"We have decided to help with a new congregation in the Baptist School a couple of blocks from our house . . . I encountered lots of work to be done at the camp. Termites have played havoc with roofs of the buildings and the jungle has begun to take over our banana and pineapple plantation."

"I bought a couple of beagle puppies, Jacob and Esau. Jennifer and Davy have really enjoyed playing with them. The week before we left we were given over \$2,500 worth of baseball equipment. I have been asked to teach the game to the students at the Baptist School. This may be where we begin a new ministry."

"Sharon and I have already attended the pastors' and wives' supper. I also attended the organization of the church in Piracuru last Saturday. They now have 36 members. The church has begun its community garden project on a nine-acre tract of land that will soon become legally theirs."

HONG KONG (BP) — Chinese Christians in Hong Kong are in shock following China's military crackdown on the student pro-democracy movement.

Christians looked in horror at pictures of the "Bloody Sunday" massacre in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Many church members are wearing black armbands to symbolize their mourning. Hastily written messages have appeared on car windows, bulletin boards and shop windows.

"Thy Kingdom come in China," declared one banner. Another read: "God have mercy on China and Chinese people."

Amy Chau, a 24-year-old Baptist, said she "can't talk about it or I will cry" when asked about situation in China. But she returned later and talked about how Christians must hold together now as they never have before. And she cried.

"Before, we felt we were Hong Kong people and they were mainland people. But now we are all the same — Chinese," said Baptist layman Tony Lee, repeating a common sentiment.

China will regain sovereignty over Hong Kong from Great Britain in 1997. The upheaval in China has increased worries in Hong Kong about how the colony will be governed.

Baptists joined a huge but peaceful rally at a race track June 4. News transmissions of the tragedy taking place in China flashed on giant television screens. It was the third consecutive Sunday afternoon Hong Kong citizens demonstrated support for the student movement. One meeting drew more than 1 million people.

Baptists also took part in a Christian prayer vigil June 7 at a park in the center of Hong Kong's business district as the city observed a day of mourning. More than 3,000 people attended the meeting as many Christian service organizations closed offices during the afternoon to allow people to participate.

More than a dozen Baptist churches held special prayer services for China June 9. The simultaneous services began at 5 p.m. and many lasted until the next morning.

Christians need guidance at this critical time, according to Timothy Lau, pastor of Hong Kong Baptist Church.

"Instead of just reacting on an emotional level, we must be prepared to

meet the changes that are occurring around us," he said.

Lau said Christians were initially elated and hopeful as the pro-democracy movement gained momentum. "But now the students have fallen and our people don't know what to do. They are angry. As pastor, I must help them find the proper way to respond."

Christians condemned the actions of a mob that disrupted a small area of the British colony on June 7, the day designated for mourning.

Baptist churches, schools, and Hong Kong Baptist College observed the day with memorial services and prayer meetings.

Lau said he is seeking ways to lead his church members to a deeper level of faith. He hopes it will enable them to play a greater role in the future of China and Hong Kong.

Jachin Chan, president of the Hong Kong Baptist Convention, said the convention also is grappling with its role after the events in Beijing.

"We have discussed separation of church and state thoroughly," Chan said. "I personally feel, although the church should not be involved in politics, individual Christians should. History is full of Christian activists and martyrs. Each has to follow God's leading."

The Baptist convention published a declaration in local newspapers supporting democracy and freedom. Pledging Baptists would offer prayers for the future of China, the declaration also extended condolences to the families of the dead in Beijing.

Chan said China's political uncertainty has pushed many church members to decide that emigrating to another country was their only choice. He reported many Baptists have definitely decided to emigrate.

Kowloon City Baptist Church also is counseling and educating its 8,000 members to deal with the aftermath of the China violence. Pastor James Cheung scheduled a one-hour meeting to consider the biblical directives for meeting the crisis. The meeting lasted nearly three hours.

Lounette Templeton is press representative for Southern Baptist missionaries in Hong Kong.

SCRAPBOOK

God's flowers

Wildflowers don't need any special care; Yet they grow abundantly everywhere. While I coax and pamper my flowers just so, Wildflowers in wild profusion grow. I call them God's flowers, for I know He's the one Who watches over them when all's said and done. When I see a hillside covered with flowers, I just want to stop and stay a few hours. How does it happen? I can't explain, But the beauty is there again and again, And on days when He seems far away. The wildflowers are there to brighten my day.

—Ruth N. Crager
State Line



Tangled in the twine

Tangled in the twine of the world's own faults. Fearing every move I make. Fearing being tangled deeper and deeper, For the twine will never break. Is there any hope for the future? Will the twine begin to thin? Will the faults of the world begin to lessen? Will the world have less sin? Or will it still bear the same, thick twine That holds the sin of man, Like the thornbush that captures the tender skin Of the foolish faulty hand?

—Joey Williford, 17
Ripley

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